

only felt when you want to raise a subsequent loan. Then you find that the capitalists are not at home when you call upon them.

Another large theatre has had its Anarchist scare. This time it was the Paris Opera House; under the circumstances, just where we should expect it. But it was neither a bomb nor a shabby-genteel occupant of the stalls that caused the alarm this time. A rumour got about that the chain holding the enormous chandelier from the centre of the ceiling had been half cut through. The sword of Damocles could inspire no such terror as this; the sword might wound Damocles, but the huge chandelier, hanging from its thread, would crush some tens of persons in the *parterre*. We hope that the scare will not spread to London theatres with their similar heavy overhanging chandeliers; but there can be no doubt that these unnecessary ornaments do look uncommonly dangerous. Surely in these electric lamp days these masses of glass "lustres" might be dispensed with.

Professor Stuart and the gentlemen from metropolitan vestries who waited upon Mr. Gladstone yesterday must be easily pleased if they are satisfied with what they got from the aged Premier. He assured them of his sympathy and esteem; he believed that there was no denying the existence of a great deal of distress; he thought the subject of the utilization of town refuse was exceedingly interesting; and he hoped the attitude of the Government was well known. We fear the deputation scarcely departed "much strengthened," but we and they ought not to blame the eloquent and polite old gentleman for this. They had nothing to suggest beyond the subsidizing of "light railways" and other unprofitable schemes, and even the Grand Old Premier did not see his way to help them with fair words there.

The London County Council, it is true, might do something if it would get on with its very necessary work while it is wrangling over Betterment, instead of refusing to employ Labour until it has settled with the Lords. But we do not pretend to think that the unemployed "problem" would be much helped to a final settlement by this. As the new report of the Mansion House Committee shows, the various pretty plans tried by one public body and another last year have all proved failures. Relief works—*i.e.*, unprofitable undertakings merely set a-going for the purpose of paying wages—increase the normal evil rather than alleviate it, say the Committee. Since they have previously tried their hand with rather less striking failure than has attended most of such operations at dealing with the unemployed, it is suggestive that they have no panacea to recommend this winter.

Is "snapdragon" really a dangerous game? And is it (as the *Daily Telegraph* fiercely argues this morning) a sport only fit for a society "rough frequently to coarseness and sometimes to brutality," a pastime indeed to be ranked with "throwing cocks," baiting the bull and the badger, and whipping the blind bear? Our contemporary makes too much out of the sad accident at Guildford, where the death of one boy and the burning of others was caused, not by the "snapdragon," but apparently by the stupidity of some one who went to pour a whole large bottle of methylated spirit on the flame. "Snapdragon" is a playful and comparatively innocent sport; and whole bottles of methylated spirit have no business in connection with it. One might as well say abolish fires because some idiot wanted to see what a nice blaze a bottle of brandy would make when poured on one.

American ladies seem to be extraordinarily touchy. The other night there was that distinguished and tactful Mr. W. T. Stead addressing the Women's Club in Chicago, and just because he spoke with the simple candour which always distinguishes his oratory, they rose indignantly and, protesting, left the hall. This is really too silly on the part of "a highly respectable society of the fair sex." He had merely told them that he "saw before him the most disreputable women of the city, who had been favoured by Providence with all her [sic] bounteous gifts, and who yet lived entirely for themselves." And they actually were displeased with this, and thought him lacking in taste for saying that "such women were worse than the most abandoned women in the streets." Now at a St. James's Hall meeting "for Women Only" that would have been thought rather a graceful and delicate way of putting it. A nervous and thin-skinned generation these Americans, surely! Mr. Stead must be pining to get back to his dear gentlemanly English ladies and ladylike gentlemen again!

Who discovered America? It is a question which is always being answered afresh. The latest attempt to deprive Columbus of his honours is that of Captain Gambier, who in a learned article in the January *Fortnightly* gives the credit to a Dieppe sea-captain named Cousin. He maintains, and goes far to establish his contention, that this French skipper reached the mouth of the Amazon in 1488, four years before the flotilla of Columbus touched at San Salvador. Captain Gambier goes further. He holds that the Genoese explorer simply appropriated the results of his predecessor's enterprise by the aid of Vincent Pinçon, who commanded one of the vessels in his fleet and had previously crossed the Atlantic with Cousin. One thing is certain: America was discovered by a "fluke." Neither Cousin nor Columbus had the least idea that they had not reached the true "Indies"—that is, the Continent of Asia.

THE LATE SHERLOCK HOLMES.

SENSATIONAL ARREST.

WATSON ACCUSED OF THE CRIME.

(By Our Own Extra-Special Reporters.)

12.30 p.m.—Early this morning Mr. W. W. Watson, M.D. (Edin.), was arrested at his residence, 12A, Tennyson-road, St. John's-wood, on a charge of being implicated in the death of Mr. Sherlock Holmes, late of Baker-street. The arrest was quietly effected. The prisoner, we understand, was found by the police at breakfast with his wife. Being informed of the cause of their visit he expressed no surprise, and only asked to see the warrant. This having been shown him, he quietly put himself at the disposal of the police. The latter, it appears, had instructions to tell him that before accompanying them to Bow-street he was at liberty to make arrangements for the carrying on during his absence of his medical practice. Prisoner smiled at this, and said that no such arrangements were necessary, as his patient had left the country. Being warned that whatever he said would be used as evidence against him, he declined to make any further statement. He was then expeditiously removed to Bow-street. Prisoner's wife witnessed his removal with much fertility.

THE SHERLOCK HOLMES MYSTERY.

The disappearance of Mr. Holmes was an event of such recent occurrence and gave rise to so much talk that a very brief *résumé* of the affair is all that is needed here. Mr. Holmes was a man of middle age and resided in Baker-street, where he carried on the business of a private detective. He was extremely successful in his vocation, and some of his more notable triumphs must still be fresh in the minds of the public—particularly that known as "The Adventure of the Three Crowned Heads," and the still more curious "Adventure of the Man without a Wooden Leg," which had puzzled all the scientific bodies of Europe. Dr. Watson, as will be proved out of his own mouth, was a great friend of Mr. Holmes (itself a suspicious circumstance) and was in the habit of accompanying him in his professional peregrinations. It will be alleged by the prosecution, we understand, that he did so to serve certain ends of his own, which were of a monetary character. About a fortnight ago news reached London of the sudden death of the unfortunate Holmes, in circumstances that strongly pointed to foul play. Mr. Holmes and a friend had gone for a short trip to Switzerland, and it was telegraphed that Holmes had been lost in the terrible Falls of Reichenbach. He had fallen over or been precipitated. The Falls are nearly a thousand feet high; but Mr. Holmes in the course of his career had survived so many dangers, and the public had such faith in his turning-up as alert as ever next month, that no one believed him dead. The general confidence was strengthened when it became known that his companion in this expedition was his friend Watson.

WATSON'S STATEMENT.

Unfortunately for himself (though possibly under the compulsion of the police of Switzerland), Watson felt called upon to make a statement. It amounted in brief to this: that the real cause of the Swiss tour was a criminal of the name of Moriarty, from whom Holmes was flying. The deceased gentleman, according to Watson, had ruined the criminal business of Moriarty, who had sworn revenge. This shattered the nerves of Holmes, who fled to the Continent, taking Watson with him. All went well until the two travellers reached the Falls of Reichenbach. Hither they were followed by a Swiss boy with a letter to Watson. It purported to come from the innkeeper of Meiringen, a neighbouring village, and implored the Doctor to hasten to the inn and give his professional attendance to a lady who had fallen ill there. Leaving Holmes at the Fall, Watson hurried to the inn, only to discover that the landlord had sent him no such letter. Remembering Moriarty, Watson ran back to the Falls, but arrived too late. All he found there was signs of a desperate struggle and a slip of writing from Holmes explaining that he and Moriarty had murdered each other and then flung themselves over the Falls.

POPULAR TALK.

The arrest of Watson this morning will surprise no one. It was the general opinion that some such step must follow in the interests of public justice. Special indignation was expressed at Watson's statement that Holmes was running away from Moriarty. It is notorious that Holmes was a man of immense courage, who revelled in facing danger. To represent him as anything else is acknowledged on all hands to be equivalent to saying that the People's Detective (as he was called) had

IMPOSED UPON THE PUBLIC.

We understand that printed matter by Watson himself will be produced at the trial in proof of the public contention. It may also be observed that Watson's story carries doubt on the face of it. The deadly struggle took place on a narrow path along which it is absolutely certain that the deceased must have seen Moriarty coming. Yet the two men only wrestled on the cliff. What the Crown will ask is,

WHERE WERE HOLMES'S PISTOLS?

Watson, again, is the authority for stating that the deceased never crossed his threshold without several loaded pistols in his pockets. If this were so in London, is it not quite incredible that Holmes should have been unarmed in the comparatively wild Swiss mountains, where, moreover, he is represented as living in deadly fear of Moriarty's arrival? And from Watson's sketch of the ground, nothing can be clearer than that Holmes had ample time to shoot Moriarty after the latter hove in sight. But even allowing that Holmes was unarmed, why did not Moriarty shoot him? Had he no pistols either? This is the acme of absurdity.

WHAT WATSON SAW.

Watson says that as he was leaving the neighbourhood of the Falls he saw in the distance the figure of a tall man. He suggests that this was Moriarty, who (he holds) also sent the bogus letter. In support of this theory it must be allowed that Peter Steiler, the innkeeper, admits that